



**26th Judicial District
SelfServe Center**

**CHILD CUSTODY OR VISITATION AND OR/
SUPPORT**

DUE TO THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE LAW, the forms and instructions contained in this packet may become outdated. You should review and research statutes and rules of procedure referenced in the instructions to ensure that the forms are accurate and current.

IN NO EVENT will the SelfServe Center Staff, Clerk of Court or anyone contributing to the production of these forms, instructions or guidelines be liable for any indirect or consequential damages resulting from use of the forms or information provided to you by the SelfServe Center.

IF THERE ARE ANY QUESTIONS in your mind concerning these forms, or your legal rights, it is strongly recommended that you consult with an attorney.

USE THESE FORMS AT YOUR OWN RISK. THESE FORMS MAY OR MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE IN YOUR PARTICULAR CASE. ANY DESIRED OUTCOME FROM THE USE OF THESE FORMS CANNOT BE PREDICTED OR GUARANTEED. IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU SEEK LEGAL ADVICE!

Filing Fees are regulated by the North Carolina General Assembly, and are subject to change. Please consult with the Staff of the Civil Filing Department or the SelfServe Center for the most up to date fees.

THE FILING FEE FOR THIS ACTION IS: _____

© 1999 SelfServe Center



**PLEASE CAREFULLY READ THE FORMS AND
INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED IN THIS PACKET.**

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONSULT
WITH AN ATTORNEY.**

THESE ARE EDUCATIONAL FORMS DESIGNED TO
ASSIST YOU, BUT YOU ARE REPRESENTING
YOURSELF. PLEASE REVIEW AND FOLLOW THE
DIRECTIONS TO IMPROVE YOUR PERFORMANCE IN
YOUR CASE. FAILURE TO READ AND FOLLOW THE
INSTRUCTIONS MAY ADVERSELY IMPACT YOUR
CLAIM.

**YOU ARE ALSO ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND
ONE OF OUR CLINICS.**

What is this?

This packet of information is provided for individuals who wish to pursue a case without the assistance of an attorney. This is called a *pro se* or self represented case. If you are not sure that you want or need to go to court, please ask the SelfServe Center staff to direct you to phone numbers for lawyer referral services or the list of local attorneys willing to provide “unbundled services” (*willing to represent you for a limited portion of your case on an hourly fee basis*). Please note that this is a *process* that you will be going through. If things do not proceed as quickly as you hoped, please be patient. The goal is to provide the best and safest environment for the child. That is not a one step procedure.

How will it help me?

If you do not plan to use an attorney, this packet will guide you through the process by providing the forms and filing instructions that you will need. Since you are representing yourself, it is YOUR responsibility to ensure that these are the correct and current forms for the nature of your case. Therefore, you should review and research *applicable laws* and *rules of procedure* that apply to your type of case. If you are not able to do this, you should talk with an attorney. If at any point during the process you become confused or wish to proceed with the help of an attorney, contact the Mecklenburg County Bar Lawyer Referral Service (704) 375-0120 or the North Carolina Bar Lawyer Referral Service (800) 662-7660. The SelfServe Center also maintains a list of attorneys willing to provide “unbundled services.”

What does this mean?

Certain legal terms will be found in italics throughout. A short definition of the terms will be contained in the text. A complete legal glossary is available for your convenience in the SelfServe Center. If you still do not understand the term, consult a legal dictionary or the SelfServe Center staff. Staff CANNOT provide legal advice, but can provide procedural information and definitions of legal terminology.

What are/is Child Custody and/or Visitation and Support?

The packet available in the SelfServe Center allows a party to file for **permanent legal custody** of a child or for **visitation rights**. This packet also contains the forms to file for support to care for the child(ren). Please note that the forms assume that one parent is suing another. If you are a grandparent or other third party relative, please ask for the packet titled Non-parent Custody/Visitation or Non-parent Custody/Visitation and/or Child Support.

Can or should I file for Child Custody or Visitation or Support?

Please note that the SelfServe Center staff CANNOT provide legal advice. Therefore, we cannot tell you if you should file or what you should file, but we can tell you that you must meet certain criteria to be eligible. **THE CHILD MUST HAVE LIVED IN NORTH CAROLINA FOR THE 6 MONTHS PRIOR TO FILING, OR SINCE BIRTH.** Additionally, if there is an **EXISTING CUSTODY, VISITATION OR SUPPORT ORDER**, you must notify the SelfServe Center staff. This will affect which packet you receive. **Note:** If you have a Domestic Violence Protective Order, you may still use these forms to establish permanent legal custody and/or visitation rights or support regarding the child(ren).

What do I do first?

1. After you get your packet, **READ THE INSTRUCTIONS!** Then fill out the forms by typing or printing *neatly* in ink. You may fill them out at home or at the courthouse. Please read the forms carefully as some have a “Verification” page. This means that they must be signed in the presence of a Notary Public. If the document does require this, do not sign until you are in front of a Notary. They can be likely found at banks, law firms, and insurance agencies. A few may also be found in the Yellow Pages. Notaries often charge a small fee and require you to show a picture ID for their services. Be sure you have your documents already notarized when you take them to the Clerk’s Office to file.
2. The SelfServe Center has a video available on filing for child custody and/or visitation and support. It is suggested that you view it for procedural information.
3. After the forms are filled out and notarized, you must make 2 COPIES (one for yourself, one for the other party and the original for the file).
4. Please make sure that you have cash or a money order to pay for the filing fee associated with the action you are seeking to file. Personal checks are not accepted. If you want the Sheriff of Mecklenburg County to serve the documents on the defendant, please bring an additional **\$15.00** (cash, cashier’s check or money order) made payable to the sheriff’s office. If the defendant lives outside of Mecklenburg County, pay the service of process fee to the sheriff of the county where the defendant resides. (Please refer to the “Service of Process” sheet in this packet for more information).
5. Take your completed forms, 2 copies and filing fee to the Civil Filing Department (Clerk’s Office) at 832 E. Fourth Street, Room 3725.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Your case involves complicated legal issues! This packet describes the general process, but it is impossible to cover everything that may affect your rights. If you get confused you should stop and seek advice from an attorney. The staff of the SelfServe Center, Clerk of Court, Judge, or the Trial Court Administrator’s Office **CANNOT GIVE YOU LEGAL ADVICE!**

PLEASE...if you are thinking of contacting an attorney, do so as soon as possible. Unless there is an emergency, try to contact an attorney at least 30 days before your hearing. Waiting could decrease your chances of obtaining representation.

Child Custody

STEP 1

Filing out the documents

CHECKLIST

You must complete the following documents:

- ◆ **Domestic Civil Action Cover Sheet**
- ◆ **Civil Summons**
- ◆ **Complaint**

Please note that the last page of the **Complaint** needs to be signed in the presence of a Notary Public. **There is a Notary Public on the first floor of the 26th Judicial District Building (832 E. Fourth St) in the Sheriff's Office.**

STEP 2

Filing the documents

Take these documents, 2 copies, the filing fee and the **\$15.00** fee per defendant served, (if you elect to have the Mecklenburg County Sheriff serve the documents) to the Civil Filing Department (832 E. Fourth St., Room 3725). Copies can be made for a fee in the Civil Filing Department. The clerk will file your documents. **At that time, you will be assigned a case number.** Please make a note of this case number as it should be placed in the **upper right hand corner** of all subsequent documents in the case.

STEP 3

Obtaining dates, further information, etc.

Once you have filed your documents with the Civil Filing Department, you should proceed to the Family Court Office (Room 3520) to obtain a **Notice for Front-End Status Conference** and an **Order for Parent Education Class**. The notice will include a date, time, and location. There is a fee for the Parent Education Class. The notice and order need to be filed in the Civil Filing Department, 3725, and served upon the defendant.

At your status conference, a Family Court Case Manager will review the case to make sure that service of process has been completed successfully and will then schedule the next court event. **PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOUR CORRECT MAILING ADDRESS IS IN THE FILE, AS WELL AS THE CORRECT ADDRESS FOR THE DEFENDANT.** Please also note that if your case is referred to Mediation, your claim may be resolved there. If a signed parenting agreement is reached in mediation, you will not need to be given a hearing date.

ATTENTION: PLEASE NOTE THAT IN MECKLENBURG COUNTY, IT IS **MANDATORY** THAT ALL PARTIES COMPLETE A PARENT EDUCATION COURSE AND PARTICIPATE IN CUSTODY/VISITATION MEDIATION UNLESS THE JUDGE

FINDS GOOD CAUSE OTHERWISE. FAILURE TO ATTEND COULD RESULT IN CONTEMPT AND A MONETARY FINE.

STEP 4

Service of Process

North Carolina General Statutes require that you give notice to the defendant about the filing of your claim. This is known as “Service of Process.” The correct way to serve the defendant is determined by law. If the documents are not correctly served on the defendant, the court will not hear your case.

PLEASE READ THIS SECTION VERY CAREFULLY.

If you have concerns or are confused, consult with an attorney immediately!

In order for your case to be binding against the Defendant, he/she must be given notice of the case, or *served* in a manner that is recognized by the court. **PLEASE NOTE that service of process must be *completed successfully* for your case to proceed and avoid dismissal.** This means that if you have the sheriff serve the documents, **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to follow up and make sure service was completed. If you serve by certified or registered mail, **YOU MUST** file the **Affidavit of Service of Process by Registered or Certified Mail** found in your packet along with the **green return-receipt card** you receive in the mail. The forms needed for *Service of Process* and the procedures you must follow are complex and will vary. In order to learn which steps to take next, review the following and choose the correct forms and procedures for your case:

Available Methods for Service of Process:

- I. Service of Process by the Sheriff:** If the Plaintiff lives in North Carolina and will not accept service of process, you will need to pay a \$15.00 service fee per party served to the sheriff in the county where he/she resides to serve the papers.
 - a. If Defendant lives in Mecklenburg County:**
 - i. Take the **Civil Summons** and **Complaint** to the Clerk’s Office, Room 3725, when you file for custody/visitation/support. The summons should include the most recent address of the Defendant and any other information that will help the sheriff’s office locate him/her. These will be stamped and filed by the clerk. The Clerk’s office *may* deliver the documents to the sheriff for you. *Sometimes*, you must take the stamped documents (Summons and Complaint) and the fifteen dollar payment to the sheriff (700 East Fourth St. Charlotte, NC 28202). In either case, be sure to keep a copy of these documents.
 - ii. After delivering these documents to the sheriff, he/she will keep a copy of the summons detailing how the Complaint and Summons were delivered to the Defendant. The sheriff’s deputy will then file this information with the clerk of court.
 - iii. In order to find out if the sheriff was successful or unsuccessful in attempting to serve the Defendant, you must check *in person* with

the Clerk of Court (Room 3725). You may also call the Mecklenburg Sheriff's Office at 704-336-2543 to determine if service was successful.

b. If Defendant DOES NOT live in Mecklenburg County:

- i. If the Defendant does not live in Mecklenburg County, you must mail or deliver the Summons and Complaint to the sheriff in the county where he/she is located. The Summons should include the most recent address of the Defendant and any other information that will help the sheriff's office locate him/her. You should include a certified check or money order for the fee for service made payable to the sheriff of that county. *Contact the sheriff's office in the county where the Defendant is located to determine the fees and process associated with service of process.*
- ii. If you wish to send your paperwork to the sheriff's office to be served, you should send it by certified mail return receipt requested to provide evidence that your service request was received.
- iii. In order to find out if the sheriff was successful or unsuccessful in attempting to serve the Defendant, you must check *in person* with the clerk of court (Room 3725). You may also be able to contact the sheriff's office over the phone to confirm whether or not service was successful.

II. Service of Process by Certified or Registered Mail

- a. Service of Process by certified or registered mail can be completed within the state and outside of the state, but within the US (*please consult with an attorney if the Defendant is in the military or lives in another country*) by mailing a **copy** of the Summons and Complaint by **registered or certified mail, return receipt requested**, addressed to the Defendant and delivered to his/her address (or the address of the location where he/she can be contacted by mail). A postal worker can help you fill out the necessary forms registered or certified mailing. **If you choose this type of service, you must file an *Affidavit of Service of Process by Certified or Registered Mail* when you receive the return receipt (the "green card"). You must attach the original return receipt to your affidavit.**
- b. **The Affidavit of Service must be taken to and signed in the presence of a Notary Public. There is a Notary Public in the Sheriff's Office on the first floor of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse.**

III. Service of Process by Publication: You Do NOT Know Where the Defendant Is: (THIS SHOULD BE YOUR LAST RESORT)

- a. If you do not know where the Defendant is located, you will need to serve him/her by "publication." If you know where the Defendant is or can find out his/her address, this process should not be used. Publication is a complex process using the newspaper to run notice of the divorce. You

should speak to an attorney regarding this type of service. You can find a list of available attorneys and their fees at the SelfServe office (Room 3350).

Lawyer Referral Services:

Mecklenburg County Bar Lawyer Referral Service: (704) 375-0120 or www.meckbar.org

North Carolina Lawyer Referral Service: (800) 662-7660

STEP 5
Attendance

Be sure to attend all scheduled court events on time and dressed appropriately (as if you were going to a job interview). This is very important.

Further, that copies of the Summons and Complaint were in fact received by the
Defendant on _____ as evidenced by the attached genuine receipt.
(insert date of receipt)

(Please attach the original return receipt to this affidavit)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this the _____
day of _____, _____.
(insert date)
(insert month) *(insert year)*

(sign here in the presence of a Notary Public)

Sworn to and Subscribed before me this the _____ day of _____, _____.

(Notary Public)

My Commission Expires: _____

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF MECKLENBURG

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
_____-CVD-_____ ()

_____,)
)
Plaintiff,)
)
v.)
)
_____,)
)
Defendant.)

COMPLAINT FOR CHILD CUSTODY
OR VISITATION AND / OR
CHILD SUPPORT

Plaintiff, complaining of defendant, alleges and says:

PARTIES, JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. Plaintiff is a citizen and resident of _____.
(County and State)
2. Plaintiff's address is _____.
3. Defendant is a citizen and resident of _____.
(County and State)
4. Defendant's address is _____.
5. Defendant's relationship to child: _____.
(Mother, Father, etc.)

6. The name(s), age(s) and birth date(s) of the child or children at issue in this case is/are as follows:

7. Explain your standing to bring this civil action (e.g., I am the mother/father/other relative of the child/children):

8. That during the past five years (or since birth if the child is less than five years old), the (child) (children) have lived with:

Name of child _____, birthdate _____, birthplace _____.

PERIOD	ADDRESS	PERSON LIVED WITH	PRESENT ADDRESS
___ to present	_____	_____	_____
___ to _____	_____	_____	_____
___ to _____	_____	_____	_____

Name of child _____, birthdate _____, birthplace _____.

PERIOD	ADDRESS	PERSON LIVED WITH	PRESENT ADDRESS
___ to _____	_____	_____	_____
___ to _____	_____	_____	_____
___ to _____	_____	_____	_____

(If there are more than two children, insert additional sheets.)

9. That I (have) (have not) participated as a (party) (witness) (other capacity) in litigation concerning the custody of the minor child in (this) (another) State, viz.

_____ on _____, ____.
(if answer is affirmative, give details, stating capacity, name and address of court.)

10. That I (have) (do not have) information of any custody proceeding concerning a child mentioned above pending in a Court of this or any other State.

(If answer is affirmative, give details) _____

11. That I (know) (do not know) of a person who has physical custody of the child viz.

_____, or

(Name) (Address)

claims to have custody or visitation rights with respect to the child, viz.:

(Name)

(Address)

12. The District Court of Mecklenburg County has personal jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter jurisdiction (including jurisdiction under the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act) to decide the claim(s) and render a custody determination in this action.

13. Venue of this action is proper in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

CUSTODY OR VISITATION CLAIM

14. Plaintiff is a fit and proper person to have primary custody/visitation of the aforesaid minor child/children and an award of custody/visitation to her/him would best promote the interests and welfare of the aforesaid minor child/children.

CHILD SUPPORT CLAIMS

15. The aforesaid minor child/children is/are in need of support and maintenance for his/her/their health, education and welfare.

16. Defendant is an able-bodied man/woman regularly and gainfully employed, or capable of gainful employment, and is capable of providing support for the aforesaid minor child/children.

17. Plaintiff is entitled to have and recover child support from and of the defendant.

18. Attached hereto as Exhibit B, and incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein, is Plaintiff's Affidavit of Financial Standing setting forth his/her needs and the needs of the child/children as required by the Local Rules of Court.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, plaintiff prays the Court for relief as follows:

1. _____ That custody/visitation of the minor child/children be awarded to plaintiff.
2. _____ That defendant be ordered to pay reasonable child support.
3. _____ That defendant be taxed with the costs of this action.
4. _____ That plaintiff have and recover such other and further relief as the court may deem just and proper.

This ____ day of _____, _____.

(Signature of Plaintiff)

ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF PLAINTIFF:

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA)
)
COUNTY OF MECKLENBURG)

VERIFICATION

_____, being first duly sworn, deposes and says that he/she is the plaintiff in the foregoing action, that he/she has read the foregoing COMPLAINT and knows the contents thereof to be true of his/her own personal knowledge except for those matters and things alleged therein upon information and belief, and as to those matters and things, he/she believes same to be true.

Sworn to and subscribed before me
this ____ day of _____, _____.

Notary Public

My Commission expires _____

AOC-CV-640

PLEASE TAKE THE FOLLOWING FORMS TO THE
FAMILY COURT OFFICE (832 E. FOURTH ST.,
ROOM 3520) TO OBTAIN A HEARING DATE.

CHILD SUPPORT

STEP 1

Filing out the forms

CHECKLIST

You must complete the following documents:

Custody Documents:

- ◆ **Domestic Civil Action Cover Sheet (You have completed this as part of filing for custody)**
- ◆ **Civil Summons (You have completed this as part of filing for custody)**
- ◆ **Complaint (You have completed this as part of filing for custody)**

Child Support Documents:

- ◆ **Cover Sheet for Child Support Cases Only (pink sheet)**
- ◆ **Affidavit of Financial Standing (Plaintiff)**
- ◆ **Notice of Hearing (Defendant)**
- ◆ **Affidavit of Financial Standing (Defendant)**
- ◆ **Child Support Worksheet A, B or C for appropriate custody arrangement**
 - A: Used when you have physical custody of the child/children involved for more than two thirds of the year (244 days and up).**
 - B: Used when both parents share physical custody of the child/children involved (each parent has physical custody for at least 123 nights a year).**
 - C: Used when there is more than one child involved and each parent has physical custody of at least one of the children.**

The **Affidavit of Financial Standing** must be notarized. [You must read and understand the North Carolina Child Support Guidelines (available in the SelfServe Center) prior to completing the **Affidavit of Financial Standing**]. **There is a Notary Public on the first floor of the 26th Judicial District Building (832 E. Fourth St) in the Sheriff's Office.**

Reminder: These forms do not exceed the Child Support Guidelines amount. If you want child support in excess of the Guidelines amount, you should consult with a lawyer.

STEP 2

Filing the documents

Take the **Domestic Civil Action Cover Sheet, Cover Sheet for Child Support Cases Only, Civil Summons, Complaint and Affidavit of Financial Standing**, 2 copies of each, the filing fee and the \$15.00 fee per defendant served, (if you elect to have the Mecklenburg County Sheriff serve the documents) to the Civil Filing Department (832 E. Fourth St., Room 3725). Copies can be made for a fee in the Civil Filing Department. **At**

that time, you will be assigned a case number. Please make a note of this number, as it should be placed in the upper right hand corner of all subsequent documents in the case.

Once you have filed these documents with the Civil Filing Department, you should proceed to the Family Court Office (Room 3520) with the **Notice of Hearing** (Defendant) and **Affidavit of Financial Standing** (Plaintiff) forms to obtain a hearing date. Once you have a hearing time and date, you are ready to serve the forms on the defendant.

STEP 3

Obtaining dates, further information, etc.

Note that if you are requesting both custody and child support, the Family Court office will give you a **Front-End Status Conference** form and **Order for Parent Education Class**. The Front-End and Order need to be filed in the Civil Filing Department, 3725, and served upon the defendant. You must also attach a blank copy of the **Affidavit of Financial Standing** to the files you are going to serve the defendant with. A date for a **Temporary Child Support Hearing** will be set at your **Front-End Status Conference**.

STEP 4

Service of Process

North Carolina General Statutes require that you give notice to the defendant about the filing of your claim. This is known as “Service of Process.” The correct way to serve the defendant is determined by law. If the documents are not correctly served on the defendant, the court will not hear your case.

PLEASE READ THIS SECTION VERY CAREFULLY.

If you have concerns or are confused, consult with an attorney immediately!

In order for your case to be binding against the Defendant, he/she must be given notice of the case, or *served* in a manner that is recognized by the court. **PLEASE NOTE that service of process must be *completed successfully* for your case to proceed and avoid dismissal.** This means that if you have the sheriff serve the documents, **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to follow up and make sure service was completed. If you serve by certified or registered mail, **YOU MUST** file the **Affidavit of Service of Process by Registered or Certified Mail** found in your packet along with the **green return-receipt card** you receive in the mail. The forms needed for *Service of Process* and the procedures you must follow are complex and will vary. In order to learn which steps to take next, review the following and choose the correct forms and procedures for your case:

Available Methods for Service of Process:

IV. Service of Process by the Sheriff: If the Defendant lives in North Carolina and will not accept service of process, you will need to pay a \$15.00 service fee per party served to the sheriff in the county where he/she resides to serve the papers.

a. If Defendant lives in Mecklenburg County:

- i. Take the **Civil Summons** and **Complaint** to the Clerk's Office, Room 3725, when you file for custody/visitation/support. The summons should include the most recent address of the Defendant and any other information that will help the sheriff's office locate him/her. These will be stamped and filed by the clerk. The Clerk's office *may* deliver the documents to the sheriff for you. *Sometimes*, you must take the stamped documents (Summons and Complaint) and the fifteen dollar payment to the sheriff (700 East Fourth St. Charlotte, NC 28202). In either case, be sure to keep a copy of these documents.
- ii. After delivering these documents to the sheriff, he/she will keep a copy of the summons detailing how the Complaint and Summons were delivered to the Defendant. The sheriff's deputy will then file this information with the clerk of court.
- iii. In order to find out if the sheriff was successful or unsuccessful in attempting to serve the Defendant, you must check *in person* with the Clerk of Court (Room 3725). You may also call the Mecklenburg Sheriff's Office at 704-336-2543 to determine if service was successful.

b. If Defendant DOES NOT live in Mecklenburg County:

- i. If the Defendant does not live in Mecklenburg County, you must mail or deliver the Summons and Complaint to the sheriff in the county where he/she is located. The Summons should include the most recent address of the Defendant and any other information that will help the sheriff's office locate him/her. You should include a certified check or money order for the fee for service made payable to the sheriff *of that county*. *Contact the sheriff's office in the county where the Defendant is located to determine the fees and process associated with service of process.*
- ii. If you wish to send your paperwork to the sheriff's office to be served, you should send it by certified mail return receipt requested to provide evidence that your service request was received.

- iii. In order to find out if the sheriff was successful or unsuccessful in attempting to serve the Defendant, you must check *in person* with the clerk of court (Room 3725). You may also be able to contact the sheriff's office over the phone to confirm whether or not service was successful.

V. Service of Process by Certified or Registered Mail

- a. Service of Process by certified or registered mail can be completed within the state and outside of the state, but within the US (*please consult with an attorney if the Defendant is in the military or lives in another country*) by mailing a **copy** of the Summons and Complaint **by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested**, addressed to the Defendant and delivered to his/her address (or the address of the location where he/she can be contacted by mail). A postal worker can help you fill out the necessary forms registered or certified mailing. **If you choose this type of service, you must file an Affidavit of Service of Process by Certified or Registered Mail when you receive the return receipt (the "green card"). You must attach the original return receipt to your affidavit.**
- b. **The Affidavit of Service must be taken to and signed in the presence of a Notary Public. There is a Notary Public in the Sheriff's Office on the first floor of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse.**

VI. Service of Process by Publication: You Do NOT Know Where the Defendant Is: (THIS SHOULD BE YOUR LAST RESORT)

- a. If you do not know where the Defendant is located, you will need to serve him/her by "publication." If you know where the Defendant is or can find out his/her address, this process should not be used. Publication is a complex process using the newspaper to run notice of the divorce. You should speak to an attorney regarding this type of service. You can find a list of available attorneys and their fees at the SelfServe office (Room 3350).

Lawyer Referral Services:

*Mecklenburg County Bar Lawyer Referral Service: (704) 375-0120 or
www.meckbar.org*

North Carolina Lawyer Referral Service: (800) 662-7660

STEP 5
Attendance

Be sure to attend all scheduled court events on time and dressed appropriately (as if you were going to a job interview). This is very important.

CCF-30

CCF-31

THE FOLLOWING FORM IS VERY IMPORTANT. IT IS USED BY THE JUDGE TO DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF CHILD SUPPORT THAT SHOULD BE AWARDED.

ON THE APPROPRIATE CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES WORKSHEET, PLEASE FILL OUT AS MUCH INFORMATION AS YOU CAN.

IT IS SUGGESTED THAT YOU GIVE THIS DOCUMENT TO THE CLERK AT THE TIME OF FILING SO THAT IT WILL ALREADY BE IN YOUR FILE AT THE HEARING.